

Approved

Town of Brentwood

Budget Committee

Minutes of January 25, 2016

Meeting: Regular Budget committee meeting held at the Brentwood Town Office

Present: Krista Steger, Chairperson, Melissa Hanlon, Keith Levitsky, Bill Faria, Malcolm Allison, Elyse Gallo, Jeff Bryan, Amy Mitchell

Visitors: Ken Christiansen, Karen Clement

Chairperson Krista Steger called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Information to consider

Krista handed out the following documents for reference:

An updated spreadsheet with red highlighted items to possibly reconsidered

Warrant articles from last year and this year

Board of selectman minutes

Citizen's petition for fireworks

2015 Town budget with actual expenditures

A bid for the Prescott road reconstruction

Bond payment schedule for Prescott road reconstruction

Article for the Brentwood newsletter for the coop budget

Draft of an article regarding the Town budget for the Brentwood newsletter

Approval of Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2016 revised minutes with correction to the 2016 Swasey school budget increase of \$257,579. Motion to approve Krista/Elyse carried 7-0.

January 18 minutes were amended as discussed. Motion to approve the amended minutes Elyse/Melissa carried 7-0-1.

Correspondence

None

Selectman's Update

_A 10 year bond article \$1.25M for the reconstruction of Prescott Road was discussed, by the Budcomm even though there is no tax impact this year.

Jeff explained that Prescott road is a mess and the drainage horrible. The road agent has had this reconstruction in sight for a couple of years and approximately \$100K has been spent in the past for plans so far. 2000 feet of Prescott have to be repaved, 2 bridges have to be replaced, the road widened and drainage improved. Permits, easements and land have been obtained and an estimate procured from Dubois and King. Costs would be covered by a 10 year bond with payments starting in 2017. The bond payments are approx. \$160K (\$0.30 per

thousand based on current valuation) the first year and decrease to \$128K (\$0.22 per thousand based on current valuation) the last year. Discussion followed. Elyse noted that we are committing the town to ten years of payment by approving this project. Motion to approve Elyse/Jeff carried 7-1.

Swasey School Update

None, there have been no school board meetings since the last Budcomm meeting.

Warrant Articles

Krista reviewed the warrant articles that we have already voted on and those we have yet to vote at this meeting and the associated tax impact.

Warrant for the second of 5 payments of \$88,995 payment for the new pumper truck was considered, and discussed. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith carried 8-0.

Warrant to establish and add 20,000 to a capital reserve for new software and server was reopened Melissa/Jeff carried 8-0. Questions covering this item and its needs were answered by Karen Clement, discussion followed. The number of servers within the town and their locations were reviewed. Elyse noted that perhaps there should be an overall IT improvement plan to address all the software and server needs in the future. More discussion followed. The lack of an IT tech specialist or consultant to review the town's current and future needs and make recommendations was also noted. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith failed 2-6. This warrant article will not be recommended by the Budcomm.

Public warrant article for \$8000 for the cost of fireworks was considered, because it has a tax impact. The selectman took no action on this warrant at their meeting. Jeff noted that town sponsored fireworks have a liability concern as well as associated costs due to fire and police involvement. He said the total cost to the town would be well over \$8000. Krista noted that in the past the fireworks were done by a private party, not sponsored by the Town. Motion to approve Keith/Melissa failed 0-8.

Krista stated that total of warrant articles increases is \$256,552 which is (\$0.458 per 1000 valuation) approximately \$160.29 on a house valued at \$350K. Total tax impact is 0.629, which is \$220.15 on a house valued at \$350K.

Krista reviewed the coop school budget and warrant articles and noted that the major part of that increase is \$2M for Cooperative Middle School Expansion and Renovation Fund, if it passes.

Town Operating Budget

Krista reviewed the large increases and decreases in the Town budget and noted reasons for these changes over 2015. She intends to speak to these at town meeting.

Elyse suggested we review the increases now that actuals for 2015 are available, and perhaps we should consider “nitpicking” the numbers in the 2016 recommended town budget to reduce the town budget. Discussion followed.

Motion to reopen executive office budget Melissa/Amy carried 7-1. Extensive discussion followed regarding this item as well as a general discussion regarding potential reductions in the entire town budget. A motion was made to close the Executive office budget Jeff/Krista carried 8-0.

Krista asked each member whether or not should we reassess warrant articles or focus on the operating budget to find reductions in the taxpayer’s tax bill. Consensus was to revisit the Warrant articles. Melissa noted that the money which the town is returning to the general fund at the end of 2015 will offset the proposed increase in 2016 over the 2015 which is approximately \$288K.

Motion to reaffirm the town budget \$3,283,692 Elyse/Jeff carried 8-0.

Krista reviewed the warrant articles and their related increases and decreases. Discussion followed concerning which articles could be reduced or eliminated.

The highway building reserve fund (adding \$50K) was considered as a candidate for savings. Jeff said he estimates that the building will cost \$350K. We have 175K in the capital reserve fund, so with another 50K this year and next we are there and should go forward with the 50K. Motion to reopen the highway building warrant article Krista/Mal carried 5-3. Discussion followed. Elyse noted we have \$190K adding \$143K plus the \$50K we added last year. Keith and Bill reminded everyone that the existing building is a safety issue, the sooner we get it done the better. Malcolm suggested increasing the budget for this building to \$100K and building it now. Additional tax impact would be \$0.10. Motion to reapprove \$50K Bill/Keith carried 5-3

Other Business

Krista stated that the next meeting is Feb 8 which will start at 6:30pm and public hearing part will start at 7pm, and, after that part, the regular Budcomm meeting can resume. It will be held at the town office

Discussion of drop dead submission dates for town and school budgets followed.

Amy asked about a possible new school warrant article and its submission date.

Visitor Comments

None

Motion to adjourn 9:15 pm Elyse/Jeff, carried 8-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Malcolm Allison

